

left one noon in charge of the office and I wanted to write a letter. I took the firm's note-paper without asking, then I took the firm's envelopes, and then I opened the drawer and took out a stamp, put it on the letter and posted it, and when I dropped the letter into the box I dropped my character with it. That was the beginning of my downfall. I went on until I found myself in a prison cell in this country, serving a term of three years and, altho saved to-day, I feel the blight and blot of my awful sin."

That evil beginning was comparatively easy, but how very hard was the way into which it led him! Bad habits, like good ones, grow. They grow rapidly in strength and in consequences.

Temptation to wrong-doing is often strong to the young people who have been kept from evil ways, and some of them say that it is difficult for them to resist the temptation. We may believe this, and yet it should be borne in mind that it is much easier to resist the temptation to begin a course of evil doing than it is to break away from the habit of bad-doing, when it has been running a year or two. It is vastly easier to decide against riding down a steep hill on a sled than it is to stop riding, after one has descended half-way down the hill. Resist all bad beginnings!

REMINISCENCES

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In a former article I referred to the history of the founding of Ashland College. What I am telling is well remembered by a few of about my age, but some may have forgotten, and many others of the church never knew only as they have heard thru traditionary channels. I have wanted long to see Holsinger's History of the Tunkers in which I hope to read of some things almost forgotten, but which should be remembered, and some things which have been grossly misrepresented by our traducers which should be truthfully set forth and preserved in history. In an article published in the *Gospel Messenger* recently written by Elder S. Z. Sharp, ex-president of Ashland College and one of the foremost Progressives of *ante-bellum* days (or before he was forced to resign his position as president by the board of trustees) the writer, indirectly but plainly, gives out the startling information that the Progressives, with the Old Order Brethren, had been a hindrance to the church in its attempt to establish colleges and missions, and speaks of the "immense strides forward" "the main body" has made "since the two antagonistic elements known as the Old Order and the Progressives left our church." The historical facts are: The Old Order were the only ones who voluntarily left the church and they were the only ones who antagonized the College and mission work, together with Sunday-school work and all new things. I wonder that they have survived the old century and now living in the new.

The Progressives were expelled at the instigation of those Old Order brethren who would not go out with the Old Order, but remained to control the Annual Meeting if possible. They promised the Old Order brethren who were seceding that if they would remain with "the body" they would expel all the Progressives from the Atlantic to the Pacific and thus make it agreeable for them to remain. They fulfilled their pledge only in part, and perhaps succeeded in holding some of the Old Order brethren, but could not prevent the organization of the Old Order. The committee sent to expel Holsinger did the work unto which it had been appointed, without preferring charges or giving him a trial. Practically the entire Berlin church was expelled by the same process. Elder S. H. Bashor was expelled also without trial and without knowledge of what was coming because he had in a mild but logical and scriptural way questioned the proceedings of A. M. thru a few publications.

The writer of these reminiscences was expelled because he continued to fellowship Holsinger, Bashor, and many others who he believed to be exemplary Christians and had been unfairly treated. One test that was made by the inquisitors who had the work in charge to expel Progressives in order to hold the Old Order, was to ask their victims to promise to obey the decisions of Annual Meeting. This promise no intelligent member could make without self stultification. Hardly any of the members of the committee lived up to the decisions themselves. One of the elders who sat in judgment in my case was addicted to the filthy use of tobacco, another had not conformed to the order in dress, and none of them proved themselves any better Christians than were those whom they asked us to regard as heathens and publicans. Elder Sharp is well acquainted with the above facts and I wonder that he dared to write as he did, as even many readers of the *Gospel Messenger* will know that he perverted the truth.

If the Progressives antagonized the establishment of colleges and missions then Sharp is guilty also for he surely was numbered among the Progressives in those days. To prove my position I will just remind Elder Sharp of a circumstance that will also help to refresh his memory about similar happenings. Ohio Progressives headed by Elder P. J. Brown and E. C. Packer had undertaken the work to raise a fund to establish a school, and they wanted the assistance of Elder Sharp. The professor came but lo and behold! what did we see? A Tunker elder dressed in the garb of a Presbyterian. Now the Progressive officials of the church in Ohio, and many who were not officials, had by this time in a spirit of self denial conformed to the order in dress and they knew that it would never do to send Elder Sharp out among the good old brethren who held the purse strings dressed up in such a sinful way. But what was to be done? Fortunately Elder Sharp had come into

Canton by rail and had not yet emerged from the home of Brother Packer. If any of the faithful did see him coming they did not suspect him to be a brother which in this case was to his and our advantage. He was taken in charge by Brother Packer and thru the persuasive eloquence of that wonderful man, Elder Sharp, notwithstanding his large development of self-esteem and firmness, was finally made to see that it would be better for him to yield in this one particular, which was really unimportant, in order that he might be influential in helping us to accomplish something that was really of vital importance, and the Elder yielded. Mrs. Packer, who was an expert seamstress, took charge of those Presbyterian clothes and during the night while Elder Sharp reposed in the arms of Morpheus, she deftly cut off the corners of the coat, arranged the collar, and doubled down the hat band, and as Elder Sharp already parted his hair in the middle, nature having done that for him, we could start him out the next day with an outward appearance that enabled him to pass, "and he was passed." Now this was all done to promote education by us Progressives in that day, and I hope Elder Sharp will hereafter remember this fact. But let me say here in justice to Elder Sharp that the article referred to in the *Messenger* was not written for the purpose of showing ill will to the Progressives. What he said about the Old Order and Progressives was only incidental to prove to the main body that the Elder was himself a loyal Conservative. The object of the article was to show that the main body was acting very inconsistent by insisting that their missionaries must all conform strictly to the order of the church, but that in selecting teachers for their schools they employ men who are not in harmony with the teachings of the church in all things. Elder Sharp was right in the major part of his article, providing, of course, there was not a shortage of the right kind of professors. And there probably is not as the Elder knows at least of one professor of the right stripe who is out of a job.

This brings me to the point of relating one of the troubles with which we were confronted in starting Ashland College. We recognized the propriety of securing Tunker professors to place on the faculty of a Tunker college, but where were these to be found? Our troubles in this direction reminded me of the controversy concerning the priority of the hen or the eggs. Some told us we were not ready yet for a Tunker school because there were no Tunker professors to constitute a faculty. These represented the disputants who would say there must be eggs before there can be hens. Others said we never could get a faculty of Tunkers for a Tunker college so long as our young men and women had to be sent off to schools of other denominations to become educated. These represented the ones who claimed that there could be no eggs without a hen. So we decided properly that the Tunker college must come first, and that we must